



May 24, 2000

### **Fitzgerald Champions 'Green Power' Conservation Plan**

#### **Senator's Proposal Requires U.S. Government to use Some Renewable Energy; Measure Enhances Consumer Information and Choice**

Story Filed: Wednesday, May 24, 2000 1:39 PM EST

WASHINGTON, May 24, 2000 /PRNewswire via COMTEX/ -- Seeking to raise public awareness of the availability of environmentally friendlier power sources, U.S. Senator Peter G. Fitzgerald (R-Illinois) today announced legislation instructing the U.S. government to use renewable energy, like solar and geothermal power, to provide electricity in some federal facilities. The proposal also requires electric utilities to provide consumers with information about the sources and environmental impact of their energy.

Renewable energy -- also known as "green power" because of its usefulness in protecting the environment -- is generated by resources such as the sun and wind. In contrast to traditional energy sources like coal and oil, renewable resources are not depleted by human use.

"Renewable resources like solar and wind power are some of the most reliable sources of energy on the planet, and they are also good for our environment," Fitzgerald explained. "If we want to encourage renewable energy development, the U.S. government should go first."

Fitzgerald's plan -- which he will offer as an amendment to the electric restructuring bill currently before the Senate Energy Committee -- would require the federal government to purchase a minimum of 3 percent of its energy from renewable sources. Fitzgerald noted that the current administration is already moving voluntarily to use green power, but said legislation is needed to ensure that future administrations continue to pursue an increasingly environmentally-conscious energy policy.

Fitzgerald's proposal would also require utilities to provide information about renewable energy and other power sources to make it easier for consumers to choose green power for their homes and offices. Under the legislation, utilities would have to provide their customers with

information about the sources and environmental impact of their electricity. This information would be included in every consumer's monthly electric bill.

"As utility companies across the country compete to re-establish themselves in today's rapidly changing energy market, consumers have the option of choosing from a growing list of providers offering a wide range of services," Fitzgerald said. "Providing consumers with detailed information about the sources and environmental implications of their power will give people the tools they need to make informed choices about which energy provider to use."

The environmental disclosure requirement in Fitzgerald's amendment is modeled after a provision included in Illinois' electric restructuring law that passed in 1997. In addition to requiring an environmental assessment, Fitzgerald's amendment, like the Illinois law, also instructs utilities to provide a pie chart breakdown of their power sources.

More than 40 utilities across the country already offer renewable energy, making green power available to nearly one quarter of all electricity users in the U.S. Fitzgerald expressed hope that his legislation, if enacted, would spur greater interest in environmentally friendly energy among both consumers and utilities.

SOURCE Office of Senator Peter G. Fitzgerald

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